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NARROWING THE FOCUS

SUMMARY

In the present paper the Administrator seeks the guidance of the Executive Board on an operational framework and a set of principles to guide UNDP in focusing its interventions on areas where it can have optimal impact in improving the lives of the world's poorest people. It identifies corporate priorities within the broad sustainable human development (SHD) framework in a crowded and competitive market for technical cooperation. It defines core services where UNDP can have maximum impact in providing support to programme countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty.

The needs of programme countries for UNDP support continue to evolve in response to change - globally, regionally and nationally - as a result of diverse factors ranging from the impact of increasing globalization, the emerging new framework for development cooperation, including the private sector, and the restructuring of the United Nations system as a whole, which will continue to unfold over the next few years.

The policy framework underpinning this operational framework is based on Executive Board decisions 94/14, 95/22 and 95/23, which provided the strategic direction for UNDP global support of SHD, and on its ongoing activities to meet the national needs of programme countries as they strive to eradicate poverty. It also draws on the organization's established strengths and assets within the United Nations system and in development cooperation as a whole.

Focusing will be based on the priorities for poverty eradication defined in the diverse development situations and difficult development phases of the 174 programme countries and territories in which UNDP is active. Flexibility

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will be critical in ensuring a judicious balance between narrowing the UNDP focus and enabling UNDP to respond speedily and effectively.

The present document was developed in close partnership with the Executive Board through formal and informal consultations and a workshop on 22 September 1997, in which Board members, UNDP resident representatives, headquarters staff, and representatives from programme country Governments were able to meet together. The Administrator welcomes the ongoing dialogue with the Executive Board, which he hopes will be carried forward through the present paper towards defining an operational framework.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. UNDP is committed to tracking, analysing, evaluating and adjusting further to align its supply of development services to evolving demand at the global, regional, and country levels. The continuing effort to focus, guided by the Executive Board and supported by the change process, will result in UNDP being in a better position to review its services and products, with a view to determining those that should be (a) phased out (b) adjusted or (c) supplemented by new products and services.

2. UNDP is narrowing its focus so that it can:

(a) Take urgent strategic action to help developing countries to accelerate their efforts to eradicate poverty;

(b) Respond to the urgent needs of programme countries to mobilize the necessary financial resources to meet their poverty eradication targets;

(c) Establish and maintain a clear substantive and operational identity given that other providers of development services - bilateral and multilateral - have also adopted capacity development for poverty eradication as their goal;

(d) Ensure a clear division of labour with other development partners - national and international - in order to have a mutually reinforcing and multiplier impact in general and to fulfil its functions in implementing United Nations reforms in particular;

(e) Maximize its programme impact through the most appropriate methodology in synergy with country-specific approaches;

(f) Invest its resources in high-leverage, high-impact, catalytic activities - a strategy that is more critical than ever given the decline in official development assistance.

3. In narrowing its focus, UNDP will forge strategic alliances with other donors - bilateral and multilateral - as well as new partnerships, based on agreed divisions of labour. In providing its core development services, UNDP will rely on its own capacity and draw upon the expertise of a wide range of partner institutions, within and outside the United Nations system. The goal for UNDP will be to strengthen coordination among development partners rather than to tackle issues on its own.

4. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) will provide an important mechanism for ensuring a clear division of labour among the respective United Nations Development Group (UNDG) members, establishing complementarities among their programmes based on common country assessments and using common country indicators to identify needed areas of intervention.

5. UNDP resources are focused on the needs of the world's poorest: 90 per cent of the organization's resources are directed to low-income

countries, home to 90 per cent of the world's poor. The new UNDP programming arrangements provide a set of tools and processes designed to ensure that focusing at the country level occurs effectively.[1]

6. Since the new programming arrangements were launched in early 1996, the following trends have been noted:

(a) A fairly limited number of thematic areas have been identified in most advisory notes;

(b) The country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) have clearly reflected the priorities identified in the advisory notes;

(c) Most countries that have already submitted programme outlines, have specified four to six focus areas for UNDP programming;

(d) The majority of outlines reviewed by the Programme Management Oversight Committee (PMOC) have complied with the criteria approved by the Executive Board to allocate target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) line 1.1.2 funds; when they have not, PMOC has recommended an amended allocation.

II. UNDP STRENGTHS AND ASSETS

7. Through legislation and in numerous consultations over recent years, the Executive Board has directed UNDP to build on its strengths and assets while according the highest priority to capacity-development for poverty eradication.

8. The change process brought the issue of comparative advantage to the fore. UNDP assets and ways of working make it a trusted development partner and give it comparative advantages in areas such as: policy dialogue; coordination; brokering; acting as a catalyst; and supporting sensitive governance and gender issues.

9. Furthermore, the UNDP SHD development framework provides a clear set of priorities, which are further refined under the 20 core services listed in chapter IV of the present document. UNDP is not, however, the only provider of these services.

10. The relevance of UNDP lies not only in the core priorities it pursues and the areas in which it works, but also in its special strengths, assets and the quality of its work in these areas (in other, perhaps more awkward terms, its "comparative advantage").

11. The strengths and assets of UNDP derive from three different sources:

(a) Over 40 years of development experience;

(b) Its central role in the United Nations;

(c) Its special approach to development cooperation.

A. Strengths based on over 40 years of development experience

12. The strengths and assets of UNDP in this area include:

(a) The staff - a unique global resource;

(b) Experience and learning built up over decades;

(c) Long-term development partnerships with both programme and contributor countries;

(d) Extensive field network;

(e) Focus on capacity development.

B. Strengths based on a central role in the United Nations and on the universality and neutrality of the United Nations

13. The strengths and assets of UNDP in this area include:

(a) Its firm basis and the normative framework of the United Nations system - neutrality, multinationality and universality - providing a powerful platform for development action and advocacy;

(b) Linking of development with human rights, humanitarian assistance and peace-building; preventive and curative development;

(c) Synergistic relationship within UNDG, with the United Nations specialized agencies and its unique set of development partners;

(d) Role in managing and funding the resident coordinator system;

(e) Provision of grant-based assistance, enabling more rapid and flexible responses not limited by the credit-worthiness of Governments but seeking to help to build that credit-worthiness.

C. Strengths based on the special approach UNDP brings to development cooperation

14. The assets and strengths of UNDP in this area include:

(a) Mandated focus on country priorities; ensuring country ownership by basing work on country priorities;

(b) Promotion of the programme approach;

(c) Focus on people, particularly on the priorities of the poorest;

(d) Promotion of national execution;

(e) Emphasis on capacity development;

(f) Innovative blend of upstream and downstream activities;

(g) Flexible, speedy and demand-driven response at the country level;

(h) Ability to bring together different actors and to create partnerships through its country office network, its emphasis on regional initiatives, its promotion of South-South cooperation;

(i) Linking of the three levels of programming and intervention (country, regional and global);

(j) Intersectoral, holistic approach to development (SHD);

(k) Dedication to the use of participatory methodologies and a strong role for civil society;

(l) Resource mobilization capacity.

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

15. The process of narrowing the UNDP focus is twofold:

(a) The identification of poverty eradication areas at the country level where UNDP can have a demonstrable impact;

(b) The identification of UNDP support in these areas that complements and adds value to national and international development efforts.

16. To identify poverty eradication areas for UNDP support at the country level, UNDP proposes that a set of guiding principles be applied. These proposed guiding principles take into account the basic organizational characteristics of UNDP wherein lie its strength and assets.

17. These guiding principles will provide a useful checklist for, inter alia:

(a) Reviewing and approving programme documents, for example CCFs;

(b) Measuring UNDP performance and accountability;

(c) Refining UNDP guidelines and procedures;

(d) Producing information on what UNDP does.

18. Applying these principles will also contribute towards ensuring a greater degree of predictability of UNDP work and towards strengthening UNDP capacity to excel in a realistic range of priority areas.

19. Ensuring the alignment of UNDP interventions with the guiding principles will help UNDP to narrow its focus further. While this is increasingly the case

at the country level, UNDP intends to develop more systematic approaches to ensure comprehensive and rigorous application of these principles.

20. The UNDP focus needs to be defined not only in terms of its special capabilities but also in the way in which it tackles problems. These special capabilities and ways of working are highlighted in the principles below.

21. By supporting programmes that adhere to all the principles outlined below, UNDP can help to ensure that its main development objectives are advanced in a way that is sustainable and that makes maximum use of the resources available to its programme country partners. UNDP is committed to concentrating its development cooperation to ensure that the following guiding principles are followed to the greatest extent possible and will serve as funding criteria. UNDP will therefore cluster its work around its core functional areas. The conceptual framework for achieving focus through applying these guiding principles is illustrated in the annex.

Principle 1. Build programme country capacity for SHD, especially poverty eradication, and ensure national ownership of development goals, strategies, policies and programmes at all levels

22. To remain a valued and trusted partner with its developing country counterparts both at the Government and civil society levels, UNDP will help its stakeholders to set the goals they want to achieve, to catalogue existing capacities while identifying gaps and to establish targets to fill those gaps.

23. Through national execution, the programme approach and other modalities, UNDP will continue to build capacity across the board for the management of SHD programmes and projects, especially for poverty eradication. UNDP will rely heavily upon local knowledge, expertise and institutions in programme activities.

Principle 2. Promote participation, dialogue and choice in decision-making

24. UNDP will promote activities that lead to broader participation by people and civil society in policy dialogue and decision-making on development matters. A common characteristic of the work of UNDP throughout the world is its strong commitment to building institutional arrangements and procedures that promote and sustain people's participation and empowerment.

25. UNDP will promote broad-based dialogue among various development partners and support networking, learning and information-sharing at the local, national, regional and global levels. UNDP will place particular emphasis on strengthening the participation of women in the development process.

Principle 3. Provide additionality while complementing the work of other providers of development services

26. In assisting programme countries to realize their development objectives, UNDP will aim to supply strategic services that:

(a) Respond to country demand;

(b) Build on UNDP comparative advantages;

(c) Cannot be or are unlikely to be provided by other providers of development services through the same ways and means.

27. Avoiding duplication, establishing clear divisions of labour and promoting synergy among the efforts of a wide range of actors will increase the organization's measurable additionality and impact.

28. In all its interventions, UNDP will seek to add value to and complement national and international development efforts in order to achieve maximum impact, and will take into account the value added of other suppliers of development cooperation services and products.

Principle 4. Support aid coordination

29. There is widespread agreement that enhanced coordination among United Nations entities would improve the effectiveness of the Organization's development and humanitarian work. As a unifying force within the United Nations for the promotion of SHD, UNDP will work to strengthen the resident coordinator system and encourage more coherent, collaborative and cost-effective programming of United Nations resources at the country level.

30. Aid management and coordination are necessary for the effective use of national and international development resources. UNDP programmes and projects will help to develop the capacity of Governments to manage and coordinate available external resources and to combine them better with domestic resources.

31. UNDP will build partnerships with the multilateral and bilateral donors to support a more coordinated approach at the country level.

32. UNDP will also continue to work actively with its country and United Nations agency partners to promote integrated, action-oriented follow-up to major international conferences.

Principle 5. Support the mobilization of additional resources for development

33. UNDP will assist the countries and territories it serves to mobilize additional external resources, to use these resources to build capacity and to reduce dependency on aid. It will help countries to apply instruments such as the programme approach, the round-table mechanism and other resource mobilization tools.

Principle 6. Use the programme approach to the maximum extent possible

34. The new programming arrangements and in particular the programme approach, provide a mechanism to ensure that country-level programmes are focused on a few, preferably mutually reinforcing, interventions. They will be in areas where the Government has determined, in consultation with UNDP and its

constituents, that UNDP has a comparative advantage as well as a high degree of leverage and impact.

35. In supporting the 174 countries and territories where it is active to implement the programme approach, UNDP will promote cross-cutting, multidisciplinary approaches to SHD that:

(a) Foster economic growth that is pro-poor, pro-women and pro-environmental protection and regeneration;

(b) Strengthen learning and South-South cooperation; and

(c) Are linked, at the global, regional and local levels, with the mandates arising from the major United Nations global conferences.

36. The TRAC line 1.1.2 mechanism further ensures that the resources are channelled towards central SHD concerns. Improved monitoring and evaluation throughout the programme cycle will also contribute to sharpening and maintaining sufficient focus in the interventions.

Principle 7. Build on lessons-learned and on best practices

37. UNDP is transforming itself into a learning organization. Doing so requires a more rigorous and systematic application of monitoring and evaluation principles as well as the development of mechanisms to ensure that lessons learned from past experience guide future programming.

38. Wherever possible, UNDP will ensure that best practices and lessons learned regarding effective programming and management, including those from new initiatives that have been appropriately evaluated, are incorporated into new programme design.

39. In addition, UNDP will draw on knowledge, experience and replicable models from outside the organization, including those based on new, innovative programming areas that have been pilot-tested, well documented and widely disseminated.

Principle 8. Ensure the programme design is results-oriented and allows for impact measurement and evaluation

40. Moving the organization from an ex ante approach to an ex post facto system of results measurement is a critical component of the UNDP 2001 change process. To reach this goal, it is essential to identify the desired impact during the planning process and to assess the potential for its achievement when monitoring programmes. Impact must also be the primary criterion for evaluating success. Clearly articulated benchmarks and success indicators are prerequisites for programme approval.

IV. CORE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

41. UNDP core development services must be determined by:

(a) Programme country demand;

(b) UNDP capacity;

(c) The guiding principles outlined above.

42. The core development services described below are not definitive; UNDP will review them periodically and update and adjust them, as necessary, to changes within and without the organization. The services have been grouped according to the five pillars of support to SHD:

(a) Establishment of an enabling environment for SHD;

(b) Poverty eradication;

(c) Employment and sustainable livelihoods;

(d) Gender equality and the advancement of women;

(e) Environmental management.

A. The establishment of an enabling environment for SHD

43. Supporting SHD requires that the socio-political and economic environment in which people live and work be structured in a way that enables them to enhance their capabilities and their ability to make choices. Two critical components of this enabling environment are good governance and the macro-policy and frameworks for SHD.

44. The strength of UNDP in this area is the way it enables programme countries to integrate the two components into their anti-poverty strategies rather than treating them separately.

45. The particular assets of UNDP in this area are its neutrality, impartiality and its central role within the United Nations system as a whole, particularly from its management and funding of the resident coordinator system.

1. Governance for SHD

46. Demand for UNDP support in a range of governance areas has increased in past years. This is a result of the organization's assets noted in paragraph 44 bolstered by its strong relationships with Governments and civil society, its long-term country presence, its participatory methodologies and its integrated approach.

47. UNDP will support the development of comprehensive country-level programmes to improve governance. In all its interventions in this area, UNDP will emphasize participation, particularly of the disadvantaged, and consensus-building. Bringing women into the governance process at all levels will be an explicit goal. It must be stressed that UNDP work in the future in these areas will continue to be in response to country requests and will continue not to impose conditionalities. UNDP intends to remain the lead agency in this area within the United Nations system.

48. Core services in the area of governance for SHD will include those outlined in paragraphs 49-64 below.

Programmes to strengthen governing institutions and democratization processes

49. UNDP will focus on building capacity in governing institutions, such as legislatures, judiciaries, electoral and human rights bodies, and the executive branch of Governments, and on supporting the development of democratic, transparent and accountable processes. Support for the institutional development of legislatures may include the development of effective parliamentary structures and procedures and the strengthening of electoral processes.

50. Support for judiciaries will focus on the structure and organization of court systems, including training judges, magistrates, lawyers and support personnel, and making access to justice easier by improving subordinate court systems. UNDP will help to build capacity for the reform of public administration, including anti-corruption measures. Particular attention will be given to enhancing government capacity to implement policies and deliver services aimed at poverty eradication and the promotion of equitable access to services.

51. UNDP will work in partnership with non-governmental organizations, women's organizations, community-based organizations, and parliamentarians to support women as participants in and leaders of political processes from the community to the international level.

52. Governance will promote greater gender equality in procedures, structures and functions of governance. It will focus on commitments made at global conferences, particularly the Beijing Platform for Action. In all these areas, it will ensure that its work is complementary to that of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

Support to civil society organizations

53. UNDP will work to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations, given their importance to the development process, which stems from their responsiveness, innovation, independent assessment of issues, direct relationship with the poor, and capacity to stimulate participation and articulate local views.

54. UNDP will also support national efforts to improve legislative and tax frameworks for these organizations and help to improve their relationships with Governments.

Programme to support decentralization

55. UNDP will support national decentralization efforts to enable people to participate more directly in governance processes and decision-making and to encourage the formulation of development programmes that are tailored to local needs and priorities.

56. UNDP will focus on developing the capacities of civil society organizations concerned with local governance issues, strengthening local authorities, implementing local pilot projects, and evaluating, documenting and disseminating best practices in decentralization. UNDP uses a participatory methodology that involves a diverse group of actors.

Support to countries in special circumstances

57. The comparative advantage of UNDP in this area lies not in its ability to provide humanitarian aid and relief but in its long-term development presence and its ability to respond to multifaceted development challenges.

58. While good governance contributes towards preventing crises - as does the building of social cohesion and consensus - UNDP will also support specific interventions before, during and after crises. These include disaster management and emergency preparedness.

59. UNDP will, at all stages of the process, dovetail its interventions with those of other United Nations entities, particularly the United Nations Office of the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

60. Before crises, UNDP will assist countries by initiating reconciliation and consensus-building efforts and by building national capacities to avoid, manage and mitigate crises. It will also monitor indicators that signal impending conflict, as well as other disasters, such as famine. In crisis-prone situations, the organization will support peace-building and social integration initiatives.

61. During a crisis, UNDP can support macro and local planning initiatives and reconciliation efforts. If the state collapses, UNDP can launch programming efforts and establish coordination mechanisms to meet specific needs, such as food-security planning. There is growing understanding that development does not cease during emergencies. Development activities complement emergency action with curative initiatives that can help to bring an end to crisis and prevent a relapse.

62. After a crisis, UNDP will assist in assessing and rebuilding governance capacities, giving priority to those strategic capacities that have the greatest impact, such as rebuilding judicial, legal and electoral systems. UNDP also

plays a leading role in coordinating resource mobilization efforts during the recovery phase as well as supporting social reintegration efforts. These efforts require support for national plans for reconstruction and rehabilitation.

63. Where crises are confined to a specific part or province of a country, UNDP will support integrated area development programmes designed to combat poverty and social exclusion. Particular emphasis will be placed on:

(a) Institutionalizing the involvement of all development actors in order to promote consensus-building, peace processes, national reconstruction, and the reintegration of uprooted populations;

(b) Building the capacity of community-based organizations to formulate and implement their own programmes; and

(c) Establishing mechanisms and systems to protect human rights, to provide social services, and to promote access to productive assets and employment opportunities.

64. UNDP will use area-based schemes to support the full reintegration of returned refugees, displaced persons, and demobilized troops. It will foster the linkage of local plans and activities to national and sectoral strategies and investments.

2. Macro-policy and frameworks for SHD

65. In coordination with the support provided by the Bretton Woods institutions, UNDP will assist programme countries to reconcile the objectives of economic growth, equity, fair distribution, and environmental sustainability. UNDP will help programme countries to ensure that their macroeconomic policies are consistent not only with social and environmental policies but also with longer-term SHD goals. Efforts made through policy dialogue and capacity-building will ensure that particular attention is paid to:

(a) Developing capacities for the improved assessment of and consensus-building around national conditions, trends and needs, including the need for external assistance;

(b) Providing policy advice on the preparation of broad SHD development strategies;

(c) Developing capacity for improved economic and financial management and restructuring of public expenditures for SHD;

(d) Combining policy work and capacity development to assist countries in implementing commitments made at international conferences, to cope with economic transitions, regional integration, and globalization and to develop plans for reconstruction and rehabilitation in post-crisis situations, all efforts closely allied with resident coordinator responsibilities.

66. Core services in the area of macro-policy and frameworks for SHD will include those outlined in paragraphs 67-76 below.

Support to country assessments and national human development reports

67. Country human development profiles form an important basis for strategic programming at the national level. UNDP supports a range of country-level assessments and is actively promoting the formulation of national human development reports in light of the interest in and impact of the global Human Development Report, commissioned by UNDP annually since 1990.

68. National human development reports, prepared in partnership with national Governments, civil society organizations, and researchers, provide up-to-date statistics and information on the human development situations of specific countries and, in some cases, states and provinces within those countries, and identify key challenges and priorities.

69. In addition to national human development reports, UNDP also supports programme countries in their common country assessments, national technical cooperation assessments, and national long-term perspective studies (NLTPS). UNDP activities include capacity development for a range of critical areas, including policy analysis, poverty mapping, and data collection. As part of this effort, UNDP will support the efforts of programme countries to develop new statistical systems and new gender-equality core indicators and empowerment measurements.

Capacity-building for economic and financial management, including aid coordination and market-based economic transitions

70. The management of public resources for SHD involves the mobilization, allocation and utilization of resources to meet the needs of all citizens as equitably as possible. UNDP core services will provide assistance to improving the institutional and organizational capacities and preconditions for better management of public resources, both domestic and external.

71. UNDP will assist developing countries in improving aid coordination through involvement at a number of different levels: support for the round-table and the consultative group processes; support for capacity development in aid coordination and management and their overall links to financial management and accountability; coordination by the resident coordinator for the United Nations development system; and coordination of resources within the programme approach.

72. UNDP will also assist in providing advice on opening up formerly planned economies, on moving to market-based approaches to economic organizations, on establishing legal frameworks for private sector development, and on anti-corruption measures, all closely related objectives.

73. UNDP will assist programme countries in scenario-building and strategic planning using the NLTPS methodology.

74. UNDP will help programme countries to develop their national capacities in a wide range of macroeconomic functions, thereby:

(a) Bringing poverty and SHD into the centre of policy discussions - specifically through efforts to bring about consistency among economic growth, social development, gender equality and environmental sustainability;

(b) Making decision-making more transparent and participatory;

(c) Influencing resource allocation; and

(d) Building partnerships and consensus among a wide range of actors in the development process.

Advisory Services for regional and global integration

75. UNDP will assist low-income countries in coping with and benefiting from globalization, particularly trade liberalization and more open financial markets. The main focus will be on least developed countries (LDCs) as a follow-up to the High-Level Ministerial Meeting on LDC Trade Development held in Geneva from 27 to 28 October 1997. The major outcome of that meeting was a proposal for an integrated framework for trade-related technical support involving the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and UNDP.

76. The role of UNDP will be to support human and institutional capacity-development to enhance the participation of LDCs in international trade and investment promotion. Such activities will be undertaken with the broader development agenda in mind, including poverty eradication, growth with equity, good governance, and social and ecological sustainability.

B. Poverty eradication

77. Economic growth and advances in key technological areas have contributed to spectacular gains in terms of improved health and increasing life expectancy in developing countries. The results of poverty-reduction efforts, however, remain highly uneven: inequality is rising in many parts of the world and more people live in absolute poverty today than ever before. Many of the ethnic conflicts that have erupted over the last ten years originate in processes of social exclusion and impoverishment.

78. Much can and needs to be learned from the poverty-reduction efforts of the last several decades. There is widespread recognition today of the multidimensional nature of poverty and of the need to integrate the political, social, cultural and environmental facets of human deprivation into traditional income-based approaches to the issue. Gender disparities in status, both within the household and the broader society, and in access to assets and income, have become a dominant concern. Most important is the need to adopt comprehensive approaches that weave into consistent whole macroeconomic orientations, institutional policies and micro-level processes that have poverty reduction as

their common objective. Such integrated approaches require that all the main components of a society - the State, civil society and the private sector - be seen as stakeholders of poverty reduction.

79. Eradicating poverty requires cross-sectoral policy approaches that simultaneously promote equitable economic growth, gender equality, basic social services, employment and livelihoods, and environmental regeneration, all targeted to the needs of the poor. Building on the creativity and resourcefulness of people living in poverty is central to the UNDP approach.

80. UNDP will focus on the formulation of integrated anti-poverty strategies and action plans that can help to provide a cohesive framework for the United Nations system and improved articulation between government efforts and the support that can be provided by the donor community.

81. UNDP will dovetail its support to programme countries with that provided, for instance, by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and others in the area of basic social services for all.

82. UNDP assets and strengths, together with the role it has played in development during the past decades, make it well-suited to play a coordinating and catalytic role in this area, particularly in the integrated follow-up to the global conferences.

83. Since the adoption of Executive Board decision 94/14, much progress has been achieved in building the required internal capacity in UNDP in this area. UNDP is becoming a more knowledge-based agency with a distinctive focus and approach that complements its assets of impartiality and neutrality.

84. Core services in the area of poverty eradication will include those outlined in paragraphs 85-93 below.

Anti-poverty strategies and action plans

85. UNDP will support programme countries in their efforts to formulate and implement national poverty eradication plans, strategies, and policies. A variety of mechanisms will be used, including the Poverty Strategies Initiative, launched in March 1996, to support country implementation of the commitments undertaken at the World Summit for Social Development.

86. Specifically, UNDP will assist programme countries to build capacity for:

(a) Poverty surveys and assessments;

(b) Engaging national partners in a dialogue on the policy and institutional framework for poverty reduction;

(c) Assessing the impact of current social policy and poverty programmes on vulnerable groups;

(d) Achieving consensus among national actors on the most effective poverty strategies;

(e) Conducting policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation of social programmes.

Poverty monitoring, definitions and indicators

87. With the work of partners such as the World Bank and UNICEF, UNDP will contribute to the elaboration of national definitions, measurements, and indicators of poverty, activities that are critical to developing poverty-eradication strategies, policies and programmes.

88. Activities will include building capacities for the establishment of a comprehensive approach to poverty measurement and monitoring beyond traditional income indicators. In this context, main data-collection instruments and their respective strengths and weaknesses will also be reviewed, as will indicators for programme monitoring.

Annual poverty report

89. In 1998, UNDP will start to publish an annual report on poverty, which will draw the attention of analysts, practitioners and decision-makers to poverty and poverty-reduction data and to critical policy issues affecting poverty-reduction strategies and programmes.

90. The annual poverty report will also document the organization's own efforts to support poverty reduction at country, regional and global levels. It will draw on UNDP-supported national human development reports and policy research activities and serve as a basis for developing a database on human poverty in developing countries and countries in transition.

91. The report will highlight country experiences and bring out best practices. Statistics and indicators will be linked to the commitments entered into at the World Summit for Social Development. It will also serve as an analytical and advocacy tool for UNDP as a whole and as an input to processes such as the review of progress made in implementing the commitments of the World Summit for Social Development, to be prepared for the year 2000.

Capacity-development to address the socio-economic impacts of HIV/AIDS

92. UNDP will help programme countries to raise awareness about and to develop capacity to address the socio-economic implications of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This will involve such issues as developing projections on the impact of the epidemic in various sectors and regions of a given country and the need to build capacity where it is being depleted.

93. The UNDP role has been defined within the collaborative agreements of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. Under that programme, UNDP works

collaboratively with other co-sponsoring organizations and development partners to strengthen national capacities to develop comprehensive and integrated national responses to the epidemic. Efforts to respond to the many challenges posed by the epidemic must increasingly take into account the social, political, economic, ethical, and technological determinants of health and development.

C. Employment and sustainable livelihoods

94. The concept of sustainable livelihoods seeks to link economic growth with human development. It goes beyond conventional employment policies by encouraging the development of livelihood strategies built on the recognition that the majority of the poor depend on multiple activities to sustain their living.

95. UNDP will focus on interventions that provide the poor, especially poor women, with access to productive assets such as credit; training and skills; links to markets; land, energy and environmental resources; and legal rights.

96. In keeping with its cross-cutting approach, UNDP is the lead proponent of this concept within the United Nations system and works in close collaboration with the International Labour Organization in particular.

97. Core services in the area of employment and sustainable livelihoods will include those outlined in paragraphs 98-102 below.

Sustainable livelihood strategies

98. The UNDP access-to-productive-assets approach will take the actual local coping strategies of the poor as the entry point, analyse policies that reinforce or disrupt these strategies, and recommend appropriate policy changes, investments and technology inputs to reinforce and build on local coping/adaptive strategies.

99. UNDP will promote ways of improving access to and interaction with the wider national and global economy through developing skills training, market access, macro-micro linkages and incentives, communications and information technology, etc. The gender and environmental dimensions - particularly poor women's access to land, water, and sources of energy - are fundamental to the national strategies.

100. In emergency situations, UNDP will play an important role in sustaining the livelihoods critical to future stability. The approach will be refined through a series of pilot efforts designed to inform national strategies.

Capacity development for micro-entrepreneurship

101. Recognizing that support to entrepreneurship development, particularly among women, is instrumental in alleviating poverty and providing employment opportunities, UNDP will assist programme countries through the MICROSTART

programme - designed to support micro-entrepreneurs at the grass-roots level by improving their access to credit.

102. UNDP will also support the design, establishment and operation of business service centres. The needs of women entrepreneurs will be a particular focus. Building partnerships among Governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and bilateral and multilateral donors will be a key strategy.

D. Gender equality and the advancement of women

103. UNDP will promote gender-mainstreaming to ensure that both men and women participate in and benefit from development. It will do so by:

(a) Developing a strong and effective approach to gender-mainstreaming in UNDP programmes across the board; and

(b) Supporting the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at the national level.

104. UNDP will help to develop capacity in Governments and in other development agents for gender-sensitive approaches to all development-related activities. UNDP will promote the empowerment of women in decision-making and support women's leadership in the economic, social and political arenas, in all its programming.

105. In crisis and post-crisis situations, for instance, UNDP will help programme countries to incorporate gender considerations to ensure the success of peace-building and social reintegration programming at the community level.

106. Core services in the area of gender equality and the advancement of women will include those outlined in paragraphs 107-108 below.

National action plans for implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

107. Working through United Nations inter-agency coordinating mechanisms and the resident coordinator system, UNDP will support the building of alliances among grass-roots and women's organizations; promote dialogue between these organizations and government authorities; design Platform for Action follow-up strategies and build institutional capacity for their implementation; develop monitoring indicators; and track implementation progress.

National action plans for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

108. In close coordination with the work of United Nations partner agencies, UNDP will support Government's, women's organizations and community service organizations in their efforts to secure accession to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. UNDP will also

support efforts to introduce gender-equality legislation and policies that promote public awareness and advocacy campaigns, partnerships with parliamentarians, and legal awareness programmes.

E. Environmental protection and regeneration

109. UNDP will support programme countries in linking environmental management with poverty eradication - given that the physical environment is often the main survival base for most of the rural poor and that the lives and livelihoods of poor people throughout the world depend on their ability to secure food, water, and sources of energy.

110. UNDP will help programme countries to develop coordinated strategies and policies for natural resource management that are consistent with international agreements, conventions, accords, and action plans. In doing so, it will focus in particular on the poor at the local level, recognizing the key role women play in natural resource management.

111. UNDP will provide support in this area mainly through Capacity 21, the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNSO), the Montreal Protocol, and the Global Environment Facility. Of these modalities, the latter two fall outside the UNDP core activities per se, as they are governed by separate mechanisms. But UNDP will coordinate its core activities closely with the capacity-development efforts under these funds.

112. The UNDP focus in the area of the environment is on the integrated implementation of Agenda 21 through country-level programming, building capacity and providing technical cooperation in developing countries, and linking environmental programming to poverty eradication. UNDP dovetails its work with that of other agencies. For instance, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Special Session of the General Assembly have taken significant steps in terms of clarifying the institutional arrangements for the implementation of Agenda 21. The United Nations Environment Programme is setting the global environmental agenda and promoting the coherent implementation of sustainable development with the United Nations system.

113. Core services in the area of environmental protection and regeneration will include those outlined in paragraphs 114-122 below.

National capacity-building programmes for sustainable water-sector development

114. UNDP will spearhead a new approach to water resources management in which national teams will analyse the water sector (in the context of the national economy), identify gaps and constraints, and outline both short- and long-term objectives for decision-making by the Government. UNDP work in this area will be undertaken within the framework of the Global Water Partnership.

115. The programmes will be designed to produce the following national-level outputs: a process of capacity-development initiated by a water-sector

assessment; a nucleus of officials and specialists trained in sustainable water-sector development; water-sector assessment reports, including planning frameworks; improved cross-sectoral collaboration; and improved coordination among national agencies and external support agencies. One special service offered will be access to and support through the Water and Sanitation Programme, of which the World Bank is co-sponsor.

Implementation of the World Food Summit

116. Complementing the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) among others, UNDP will lend support to programme country efforts to implement the Action Plan of the World Food Summit, particularly as it relates to food security.

117. UNDP support in this area will be linked with its anti-poverty strategies: poor people typically cite food insecurity at the core of their poverty; food production is therefore key to sustainable livelihoods for the poor. Much UNDP support will involve policy advice, covering fundamental aspects of the economic and social environment needed for food security, such as access to assets and the purchasing power of the poor.

118. UNDP will also dedicate resources specifically to facilitating a sustainable improvement in the productivity of agriculture, as well as to helping protect the natural resource base upon which the poor, particularly the rural poor, depend. Such efforts will typically be carried out in close collaboration with international research institutions such as the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Resources and FAO, both of which are long-time partners.

Support to national energy strategies and atmospheric protection

119. UNDP will assist programme countries in developing strategies that contribute to poverty eradication by providing poor people with access to modern energy services. The newly developed UNDP Initiative on Sustainable Energy will help countries to move towards sustainable energy use with an emphasis on more efficient use of energy and a shift to renewable energy sources by: helping countries to build their human capacity; encouraging the creation of legal and economic frameworks conducive to sustainable energy development; facilitating technology leapfrogging; supporting innovative demonstration projects; and supporting the formulation and implementation of national energy action programmes. Efforts in these areas will have a synergistic effect when combined with UNDP roles under GEF and the Montreal Protocol on climate and ozone-layer protection.

National forestry and biodiversity programmes

120. UNDP will assist programme countries through its forestry programme and the biodiversity window of Global Environment Facility (GEF) in developing strategies for sustainable forest management and the protection of biodiversity. The UNDP Programme for Forest Management to Support Sustainable Livelihoods will

help countries to improve their national capacity to identify the most viable strategies for the sustainable management of forests and related public and private sector partnerships to support sustainable livelihoods.

121. The Programme will promote improved understanding of the factors underlying successful strategies for sustainable forestry management, strengthening integrated cross-sectional approaches to national forest programmes and the development of forest partnership agreements and establishing innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable forestry management. These efforts will encompass community involvement in sustainable forestry management, industrial forestry, and community and other private sector participation in conservation-management activities. The Programme is the organization's direct follow-up to the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests of the Committee for Sustainable Development and will support the deliberations of its successor, the CSD Intergovernmental Forum on Forests.

Support for dryland management

122. Through UNSO UNDP will support countries in the implementation of the International Convention to Combat Desertification and/or Drought in Those Countries Experiencing Desertification and Drought, Particularly in Africa and will provide capacity-development assistance to affected countries to address the root causes of dryland degeneration. UNDP will focus on interventions to be carried out in the context of national poverty strategies. The Organization will help to develop capacity for the creation of national desertification funds as a way to mobilize and channel funds to support community-based anti-desertification and drought-mitigation activities. These activities will provide both an opportunity to address the priorities of local communities and a concrete mechanism around which to build an ethos of community participation.

V. EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION

123. The Executive Board may wish to provide guidance to enable UNDP to advance beyond a policy dialogue to an agreement on an operational framework.

Notes

[1] The advisory note prepared by UNDP identifies the priority needs for poverty eradication and SHD in a particular country and how UNDP can provide strategic support, based on its specific comparative advantages. The advisory note also provides the basis discussing the country's development priorities with the Government, civil society, donors and other development actors.

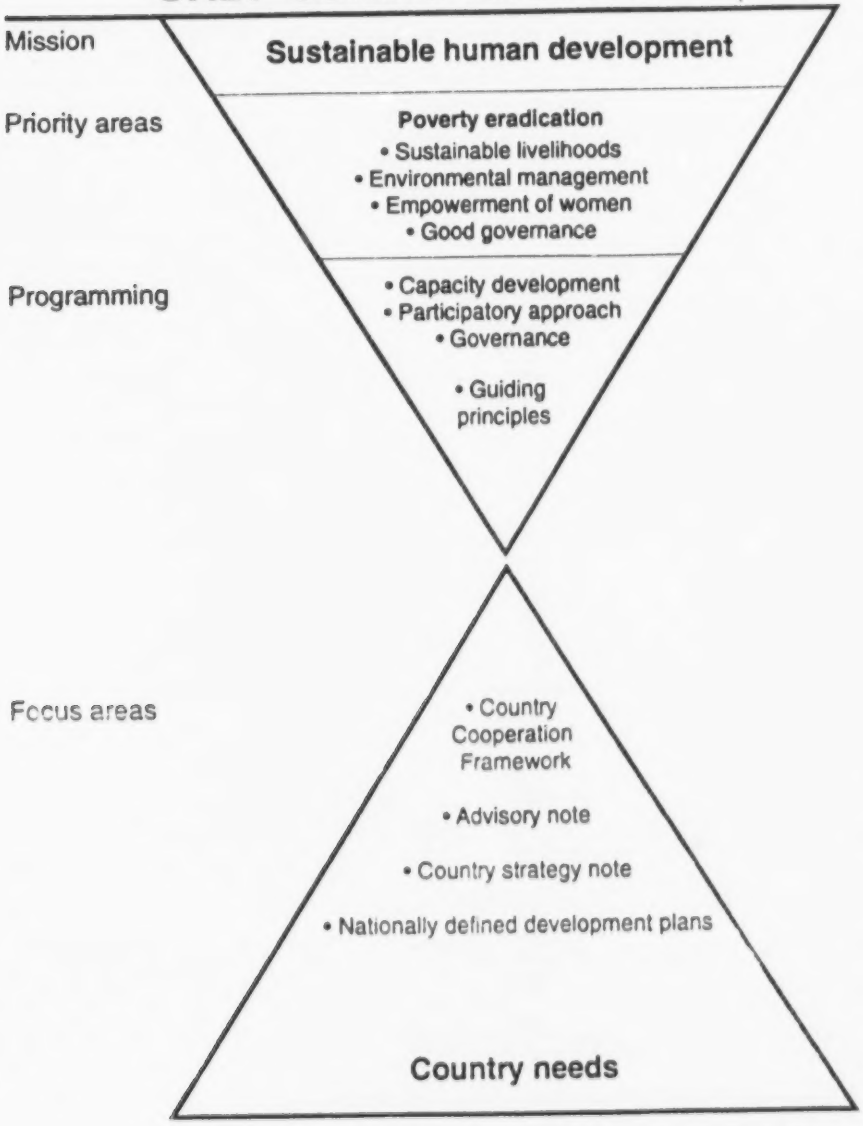
The country cooperation frameworks (CCFs), a government document outlining the priority areas for UNDP intervention, is based on the advisory note. Bilateral partners at the country level actively participate in the CCF process, making it a common avenue for their input into the focus of UNDP programmes.

Programme outlines are prepared on the basis of the broad areas of concentration identified in the CCF. Once approved, these outlines form the basis for detailed programmes, complete with measurements, benchmarks and success indicators.

The above programming process is overseen by the Programme Management and Oversight Committee, which has set up a variety of country - and headquarters - level review mechanisms to apply criteria to ensure that the process results in maximum focus for UNDP in the context of a particular country.

Annex

UNDP CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



It is at the country level that the focus of UNDP work can be assessed. At the base of the bottom pyramid, country needs as developed through nationally defined development plans, country strategy notes and advisory notes clearly identify national development challenges. In the top pyramid, the UNDP mission of sustainable human development, pursued in the four approved priority areas and using the programming tools of capacity-development and participatory approach, set out the flexiblestrengths and goals of UNDP assistance. By applying the eight guiding principles, Governments and UNDP in unison will select focused coherent programmes with impact and sustainability for inclusion in the country cooperation framework (CCF). As illustrated by the "time-glass" junction between the two pyramids, the UNDP focus thus emerges as specific interventions at the country level.